

# Stitches & String

Thanks for picking up your Stitches & String Read. Make. Do. kit!

Each kit includes:

- Two sheets of plastic canvas
- Two tapestry needles of different sizes
- Four skeins of yarn
- A template
- Instructions for stitching a bookmark and small treasure chest



You will also need a pair of scissors and you may want a marker or pencil.

You have enough materials in your kit to make a bookmark and a treasure chest, plus some extra! The bookmark is a great project to practice on, so start with the bookmark! Once you get the hang of it, you're ready to move on to the treasure chest.

You can follow along with the instructions included on paper, or watch the videos on the library's website at [my.nicheacademy.com/kidsathome](https://my.nicheacademy.com/kidsathome).

Working with plastic canvas is a great project to do while you're in the car or inside on a rainy day because it isn't a project you usually finish in a few minutes. Working on projects like these can be a great time to listen to audiobooks, which are books that you listen to! The library has a ton of great audiobooks on CD that you can check out, and we also have a ton of awesome audiobooks you can download right now onto a computer or device! To check out our audiobooks, visit **rcireads.org** and search for *talking books* to see what's available!





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Looking for more books with ideas like this? Check these out!

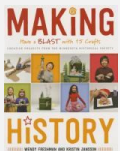


**Stitch and String Lab for Kids: 40+ Creative Projects to Sew, Embroider, Weave, Wrap, and Tie**

*Available as an eBook and in print!*  
by Cassie Stephens

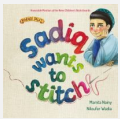


**Cool Sewing for Kids: A Fun and Creative Introduction to Fiber Art**  
by Alex Kuskowski



**Making History  
Have a Blast With 15 Crafts:  
Creative Projects From the  
Minnesota Historical Society**

by Wendy Freshman



**Sadiq Wants to Stitch**

*Coming in 2020!*  
by Mamta Nainy and Niloufer  
Wadia



**Crafting Fun for Kids of All  
Ages: Pipe Cleaners, Paint &  
Pom-poms Galore, Yarn &  
String & A Whole Lot More**

by Kim Uliana

**Stitch Camp: 18 Crafty  
Projects for Kids & Tweens,  
Learn 6 All-time Favorite Skills  
: Sew, Knit, Crochet, Felt,  
Embroider and Weave**

by Nicole Blum



**Creature Camp  
Make Your Own: 18 Soffies to  
Draw, Sew, and Stuff**  
by Wendi Gratz



**Boy Craft:  
Loads of Things to Make for  
and With Boys (and Girls)**  
by Sara Duchars



**Sewing School: 21 Sewing  
Projects Kids Will Love to Make**  
by Amie Petronis Plumley



**Max Loves Muñecas!**  
By Zetta Elliott



## Roll Your Yarn

Before you start stitching, you might want to roll your yarn into balls! This will help make sure you don't have any tangles or knots.

1. Take off the paper cover from your skein of yarn.
2. Fold up the paper. You will use this as the base for your yarn ball!
3. Find the end of your yarn and start winding it around the paper base. Use a piece of tape if you need help holding the yarn onto the paper at first.
4. Every few turns, change directions to help fill out the yarn ball.
5. Repeat steps 1-4 with your other skeins.



## Cut Your Canvas

Once your yarn is ready, you are ready to cut out your canvas!

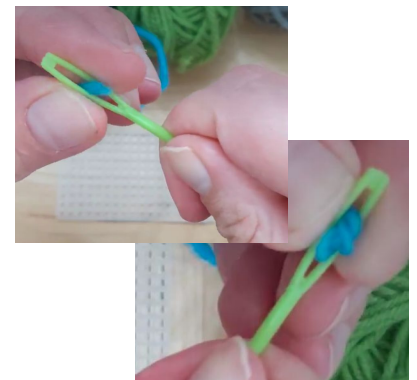
1. Decide what size you want your project to be. You can use the template in your kit or you can make your own size.
2. If you are using the template, lay your plastic canvas on top of the template. Use a marker or pencil to mark the corners where the black lines of the template end so you know where to cut.
3. Cut out your canvas.
4. You want your edges to be smooth. If you have any pokey pieces sticking out from the edges, cut them off.



## Thread Your Needle

Once you cut out your canvas, it is time to get ready to stitch!

1. Practice putting the yarn through the eye (the hole) of the bigger needle first. Try twisting the end of the yarn tightly to make it small, then slide it into the needle eye. Or, try folding the yarn in half, then pinch it together and slide it into the needle eye.
2. Cut your yarn. You will want to cut off some yarn. I recommend measuring about three times the length of your bookmark.

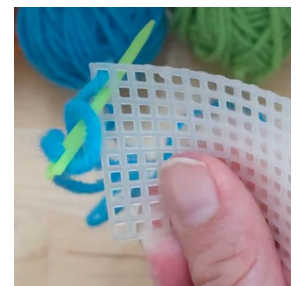


Once you are used to threading both of your needles, you can use the needle you like best!

## Make Your Tunnel and Tail

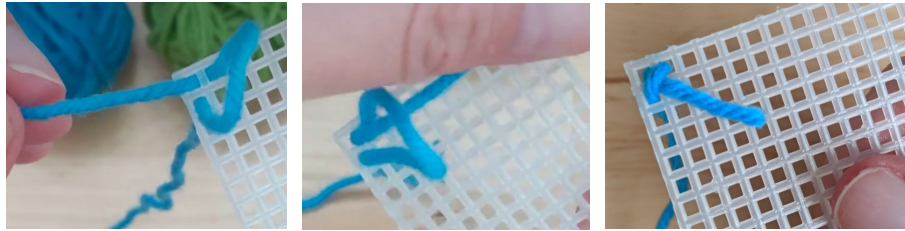
Your canvas and needle are ready! Let's start stitching!

1. In the top corner square, push your needle up through the canvas. Leave a little tail of yarn at the back. We'll come back to that.
2. In the square below the hole where you just stitched up, stitch down. You've just made your first complete stitch!
3. Next to the first square you stitched, stitch up again. Don't pull this stitch completely tight! Leave a loop in the back.





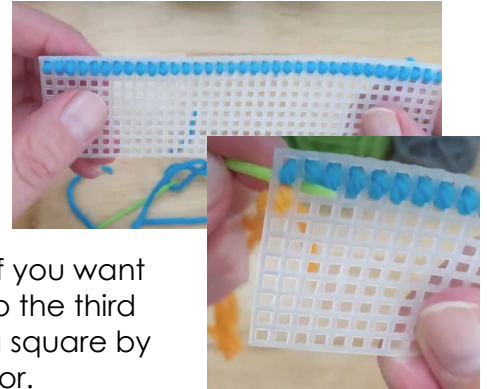
4. Turn your canvas over. See the yarn tail you left in your first stitch? See the loop you just made by not pulling the last stitch tight? This is your tail and tunnel. We are going to use them to keep them from having your yarn get loose.
5. Take the loose tail and stick it through the tunnel (your loop), then pull tight with your needle. Ta da! Your yarn is now secure and won't come loose.



### Finish Your Bookmark

Once you finish your tunnel and tail, you can keep stitching all the way down the row!

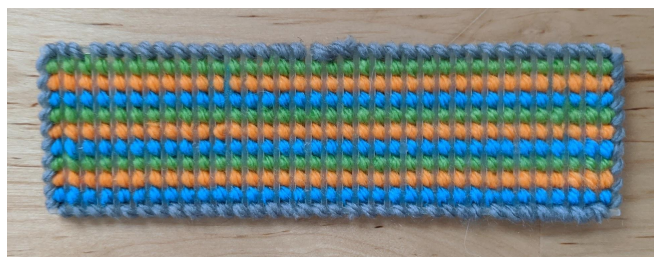
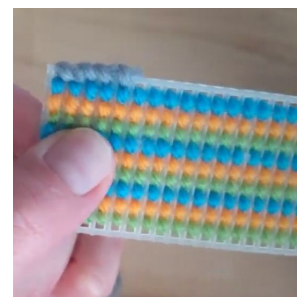
1. You stitched up in the corner, then in the hole below it. Keep repeating that stitch all the way down the row until you reach the other end of your bookmark!
2. When you reach the end of the row, you can decide if you want to switch to another color or if you want to keep going. If you want to keep going with the same color, move your needle down to the third row of squares and start stitching. Your first stitch up will be in a square by itself and your stitch down will share a square with your first color.
3. If you want to switch colors, finish off the row using the tunnel and tail we used at the start of the row. Then, pick a new color and start the new row in the second row of squares, sharing squares with your first color.
4. Repeat these steps with the tunnel and tail until all your squares are filled.



### Finish Your Bookmark Edges

Way to go! You're almost done with your bookmark. To finish off the edges, there's one last step!

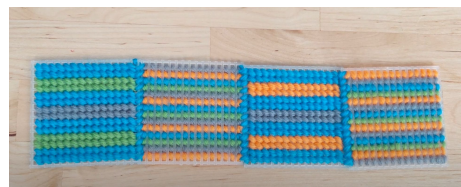
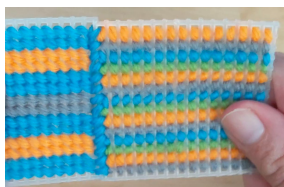
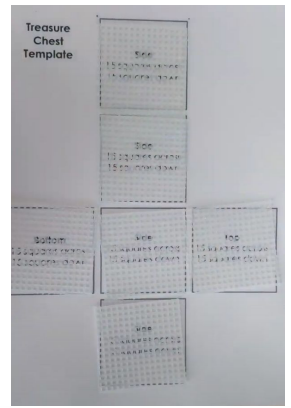
1. Instead of stitching up AND down for the edges, you only have to stitch in one direction. You can stitch only up or only down- it's up to you!
2. Stitch up or down in the corner square where you started your project and leave some yarn behind for a tail.
3. Stitch again in the next square and leave a little tunnel loop. Pull the tail through the tunnel.
4. Keep stitching around the whole bookmark! Your edge loops might get stuck on a corner. If that happens, don't worry! Just pick them up and move them where they should be.
5. Finish up with a tunnel and tail.
6. Cut off any yarn tails that are still loose.
7. You're done! You made a bookmark that you stitched yourself!



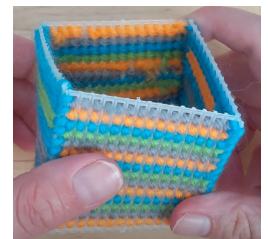
## Make Your Treasure Chest

Once you've practiced on your bookmark, you know everything you need to know to stitch a treasure chest!

1. You'll need to cut out six canvas squares that are the same size. Just like the bookmark, you can use the template or you can design your own. If you make your own, make sure all six pieces are exactly the same size.
2. You will need four canvas squares for sides, and one for the top and one for the bottom. Your designs for each square are up to you! You can use the same design you used on your bookmark or try something new. You can repeat designs or do six different designs. There are some design ideas on the next page.
3. Stitch all six of your squares, but do not stitch the edges yet. We will use the loop method we used to finish our bookmarks to hold our treasure chest together in another step. Take your time stitching these squares. It may take you a few days and your hands may need a break from stitching, and that's okay!
4. When you have all six squares ready, decide which ones you want to be the sides and the top and bottom pieces. It might help to put them on the template so you don't lose them.
5. Decide which color you want to use to stitch all of the edges and thread your needle.
6. Take two of your side square pieces and put them back to back so the insides are touching. Just like you did with the bookmark edges, we are going to stitch only in one direction: up or down, whatever you like! The difference this time is that we need to stitch through TWO pieces of canvas so these pieces hold together like treasure chest walls. Start the first stitches with a tunnel and tail to hold it together like always.
7. As you stitch, make sure the squares are still lined up and that you are stitching in the same squares on each canvas square. When you finish in the top corner, finish off with a tunnel and tail and cut your yarn.
8. Repeat steps 6 and 7 on the other side square pieces, stitching them in a row.

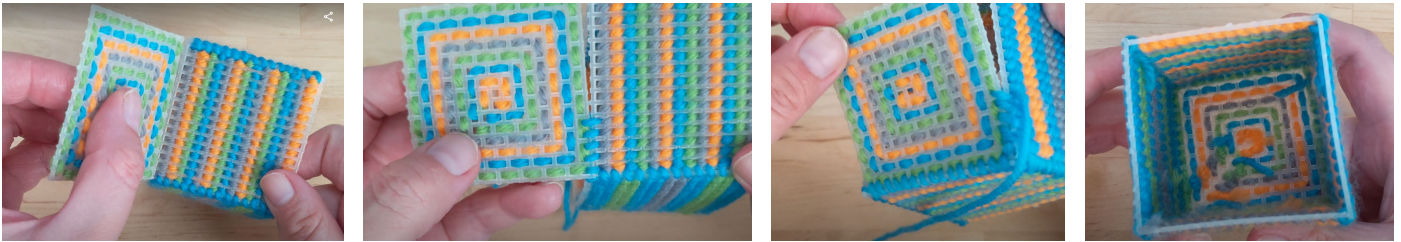


9. Once all four canvas pieces are stitched together, stitch the two end pieces together, which will turn your stitched pieces into the start of your treasure chest shape.

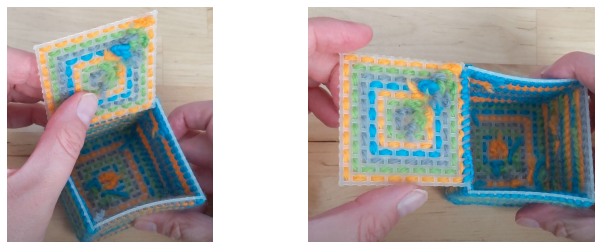




10. Now that your four sides are put together, you are ready to put on your bottom piece! Take your bottom piece and put it against a side square piece so the inside of the bottom piece is facing out and the outside is touching the side square piece. Stitch this together like you stitched all of the side square pieces together in steps 6 and 7.
11. Instead of stitching just one side, you will stitch around the whole bottom on all four sides. After you stitch the first side, you can flip the bottom piece out instead of holding it on the side. As you stitch around the bottom, it will get easier to hold in place.

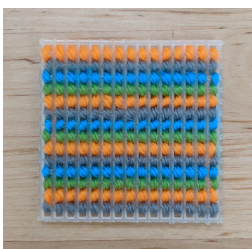


12. Once you finish all four sides of the bottom, you have finished the hardest part of the whole project! Way to go!
13. The last piece to stitch on is the top piece! You will stitch this on the same way you stitched on all of the side pieces and the start of the bottom. Decide where you want your treasure chest to open, then put it against that side square so you can stitch it to that side square.
14. Once the top piece is on, you have two choices. If you like it just as it is, you're done! You might want to stitch the edges that have not been stitched yet. If you want to finish them, you will use the same loop stitch you used to finish your bookmark and to stitch all of the treasure chest pieces together. It's up to you!



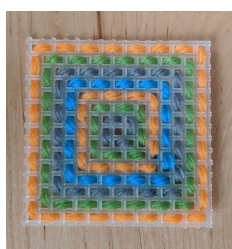
15. You did it! Way to go! Fill your treasure chest with coins, pebbles, blocks, or anything you like!

### Some Design Ideas



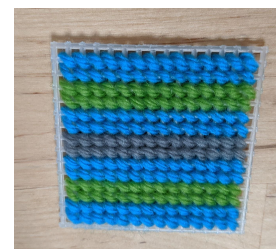
**Up and Down**

Stitch up in the top corner, then down in the square below it. Stitch up in the square next to the first stitch up.



**Swirl**

Stitch up in the top corner, then down in the square next to it. Stitch up in the next square, then down. At the end of the row, turn the canvas and keep stitching around all four sides.



**Diagonal**

Stitch up in the top corner, then down in the square below and over one. Stitch up in the square next to the first stitch up, then down in the square below and over one.